

BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. APRIL NEWSLETTER

BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY



ARE YOU BALANCED?

"Balance" is different for everyone. If your life is in balance, you're probably feeling many of the following:

- You have enough time for both family and your work.
- Your life feels fairly effortless, and you aren't suffering from excess stress.
- When something goes wrong, (the baby-sitter can't make it, a crisis at work) you can cope with it.
- You feel as though your life is "on track," both now and for the future.

Sound too good to be true? Remember these things about balance:

- Balance isn't static; it comes and goes as changes occur in life.
- You have to work at staying balanced (or finding it in the first place).
- Finding balance can be an important learning experience.

- Most of all, balance can be achieved if you take it one step at a time.

MAKE A LIST, CHECK IT TWICE

When you're overwhelmed, your head is spinning and everything feels out of control. All of the items on your to-do list probably feel of equal importance. Get a handle on your priorities by making an A & B-list and using it to help get your life back in balance. Here's how:

- Write down what you worry about the most. Include both personal and work stressors.
- Which items are most important? Move them to the top of the list.
- Figure out which items you can "let go" completely. Cross them out.
- What little things can you change about each item? Example: Asking for help picking up dry cleaning or groceries, getting a computer software program to save time balancing the checkbook, delegating more at work.

The bottom line: a little extra time spent up front organizing a to-do list can save lots of time later.

"SHAVE" SOME TIME

Try cutting back 10 percent of the time you spend on regular activities, such as taking a shower, getting dressed or going to the store. Shave time off "filler" activities, such as reading the paper or watching television. Bundle activities like picking up the dry cleaning, grocery shopping and going to the post office. You'll find that the minutes you save translate into more time having fun with the family and friends.

THE CHANGEOVER: STRATEGIES FOR A SMOOTH WORK-HOME TRANSITION

- Take 10 minutes when you get in the door to take some deep breaths, change your clothes and get used to being home.
- Set aside time to spend with your family having fun.
- Develop routines for your children's TV viewing and bedtimes, and stick to them.
- Set aside one evening a week to celebrate something good that happened within the previous seven days.

If you are struggling with work/life balance, call your BHS Care Coordinator at 800-254-1150 for confidential assistance.



A 5-WEEK PLAN FOR HEART HEALTHY EATING

TREAT A HEART-HEALTHY EATING PLAN LIKE ANY OTHER NEW PROJECT. SET A REASONABLE GOAL FOR EACH WEEK, MAKE A PLAN TO REACH THAT GOAL AND STICK TO IT. HERE'S A SAMPLE PLAN:

WEEK 1: EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Aim for at least five servings per day. Leading the list are: blueberries, cantaloupe, oranges, strawberries, sweet potatoes, asparagus, broccoli, red cabbage, spinach and bell peppers.

Ideas: Make at least three dinners that feature a vegetable dish as the main attraction. Have a salad blend of romaine lettuce and leaf spinach at lunch. Keep a bowl of colorful fruit for snacks within easy reach.

Tip: One serving size of a fruit or vegetable is about the size of a tennis ball, so getting your daily servings is easier than you may think.

WEEK 2: EAT LESS SATURATED FAT

Saturated fats (what you'll find in fatty meats, shortening, butter, cheese and whole fat dairy products) work against heart health because they usually contain high amounts of cholesterol. And trans fats found in many processed and fried foods are especially bad.

Put "better fats" to work in your diet – polyunsaturated, monounsaturated and omega-3 fatty acids.

Ideas: Cook with olive or canola oil instead of butter or margarine. Eat fish, such as cold-water salmon, at least twice per week. Add sliced avocado to your sandwiches instead of cheese. Sprinkle nuts or flaxseeds on your salad instead of bacon bits.

WEEK 3: CONTROL YOUR PORTIONS

With today's super-sized portions and convenience foods, it's easy to overeat foods such as meats, pasta, dairy products, cereals and snacks. Put a single serving size into perspective with these images:

Ping pong ball: 2 tablespoons peanut butter, sour cream or cream cheese.

A standard deck of cards: 2-3 ounces of meat (picture lean beef, pork and chicken).

And for foolproof portion (and calorie) control, use a measuring cup for foods such as ice cream, cereals, and cooked pasta and rice.

WEEK 4: WATCH THE SALT

Season foods with fresh or dried herbs or salt-free seasonings instead of salt. Buy no-salt frozen and canned vegetables (or lose excess sodium by rinsing and draining canned vegetables and beans). Choose low-sodium soups and prepared foods. Use leftover chicken or turkey to make sandwiches.

WEEK 5: READ LABELS

The Nutrition Facts label on foods gives you the information you need to choose heart-healthy options. Key areas to compare:

- **Calories per serving:** Know the serving size of the food and how many calories you are taking in.
- **Fats:** Choose foods that get less than one-third of their calories from fat. Choose foods with zero trans fats and the lowest amount of saturated fat.
- **Sodium:** No more than 2,300 mg per day.
- **Fiber:** Should add up to at least 25-30 grams per day
- **Ingredient list:** The first ingredients make up the largest share. Choose foods sparingly that list sugar high on the list.

FIGURE THE FAT



**American
Heart
Association®**
Learn and Live

The American Heart Association recommends getting no more than 30 percent of calories from fat. When you read a food label, divide the fat calories by total calories and multiply by 100 to get the percentage of the food's calories that are derived from fat.



WELLNESS PROGRAMS DELIVER MIXED RESULTS



A new Rand Corp. study examining a large employee wellness program, which included separate chronic disease management and healthy lifestyle initiatives, found that efforts to help employees manage chronic illnesses saved \$3.78 in health care costs for every \$1 invested in the effort.

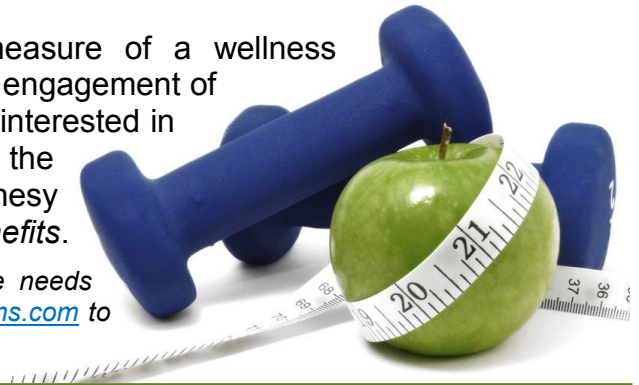
However, wellness efforts that encourage healthy living lifestyle changes did *not* show a positive ROI on health care costs, but analysis showed that lifestyle management *can* reduce absenteeism.

As a result, if an employer wants to improve employee health or productivity, an evidence-based lifestyle management program can achieve this goal. But employers who are seeking a healthy ROI on their programs should target employees who already have chronic diseases.

“While workplace wellness programs have the potential to reduce health risks and cut health care spending, employers and policymakers should not take for granted that the lifestyle-management components of the programs can reduce costs or lead to savings overall,” said Soeren Mattke, the study’s senior author.

Moreover, ROI shouldn’t be viewed as the sole measure of a wellness program’s success. “One of the best ways to encourage engagement of employees is to make them realize that the employer is interested in and cares about the health and welfare of both the employee and the employee’s family,” wrote John Hennesy and Larry Hicks in the *Journal of Compensation and Benefits*.

BHS can provide wellness programs customized to your unique needs through Wellness First. Contact marketing@behavioralhealthsystems.com to discuss program options.



Happy Marriage = Healthier Lives



A University of Missouri expert says that people in happy marriages are more likely to rate their health better than their peers as they age. Evidently, engaging with one’s spouse builds a strong relationship that can improve spirits, promote feelings of well-being and lower stress.

Analyzing data from 707 continuously married adults that participated in the Marital Instability Over the Life Course panel study, a 20-year nationwide research project begun in 1980, researchers found that married people have better mental and physical health and are less likely to develop chronic conditions than their unmarried, widowed or divorced peers.

Thus, researcher recommended involving spouses and families in treatment for any illness. They further suggested that in cases of a strained marital relationship, improving marital harmony would also improve health.

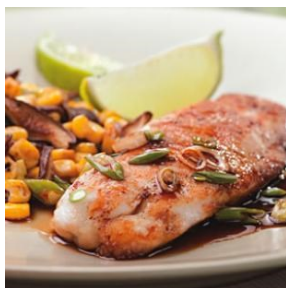
6 WAYS TO STAY FIT AT THE OFFICE

We all know that getting to the gym before or after a long day at the office is tough, so how about incorporating fitness and health into your work day. Here are 6 tips to stay fit at the office.



1. Say "NO" to slouch. Sit up at your desk with good posture and use your core muscles to keep your back long and tall. Sit on a medicine ball at your desk if you really want to tuck the core in.
2. Take stairs whenever possible. If you don't have time to walk up multiple flights of stairs or your office is too high, simply get off the elevator one flight below your destination and walk up the extra flight.
3. Stand, don't sit. Simply standing burns double the calories of sitting. And, if you pace or step side to side, you've increased your energy burn by 3 to 4 times.
4. Do a set of 10 to 15 push-ups against the sink in the restroom or against the wall in your office every time you get up or go to the restroom.
5. Squat before you sit. Instead of immediately sitting at your desk, do a set of 10 squats. To squat, lower your hips to your chair, stand up, and then sit again. This is a fantastic functional exercise that will keep your legs strong into old age.
6. Do one stretch every hour while seated at your desk. You can do a cat stretch for your back, shoulder shrugs for the neck and shoulders, neck rolls for your neck, seated twist for the spine, place one ankle on the opposite thigh for a deep hip stretch, or extend your heel forward with leg straight while sitting at the edge of your chair to stretch your hamstrings.

Five-Spice Tilapia



Recipe source: eatingwell.com

Ingredients:

- 1 pound tilapia fillets
- 1 teaspoon five-spice powder
- 1/4 cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

180 calories, 6g fat, 1g saturated fat, 24g protein, 9g carbs, 411 mg sodium

Instructions:

1. Sprinkle both sides of tilapia fillets with five-spice powder. Combine soy sauce and brown sugar in a small bowl.
2. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the tilapia and cook until the outer edges are opaque, about 2 minutes.
3. Reduce heat to medium, turn the fish over, stir the soy mixture and pour into the pan. Bring the sauce to a boil and cook until the fish is cooked through and the sauce has thickened slightly, about 2 minutes more.
4. Add scallions and remove from the heat. Serve the fish drizzled with the pan sauce.

Servings:

Makes 4 servings